

Amendments to the claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An image processing device, comprising:

image data inputting means for inputting image data;

image data storing means for storing the image data inputted by the image data inputting means;

image data processing means for processing the image data stored in the image data storing means; and

image data invalidating means for performing invalidation of the image data stored in the image data storing means, the image processing device further comprising:

directing means for directing suspension of the invalidation performed by the image data invalidating means while the invalidation is being performed; and

permitting means for permitting the suspension of the invalidation being performed, in response to a request of the suspension of the invalidation directed by the directing means, after it is confirmed that a user who requested the suspension of the invalidation is a certified user.

Claim 2 (original): The image processing device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the image data invalidating means continues the invalidation until the suspension of the invalidation is permitted.

Claim 3 (original): The image processing device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the permitting means permits the suspension of the invalidation after obtaining approval by an administrator who administrates the image processing device.

Claim 4 (original): The image processing device as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the permitting means permits the suspension of the invalidation by input of a key operator code.

Claim 5 (currently amended): An image processing method, comprising the steps of:

(a) storing image data and carrying out required image processing with respect to the image data thus stored; and

(b) performing invalidation of the image data thus processed so as to prevent reproduction of the image data;

(c) when request of suspension of the invalidation is made while the invalidation is being performed after the step (b) is started, carrying out identification of a user who made the request of the invalidation; and

(d) suspending the invalidation being performed after confirming that the user who made the request of the invalidation is a certified user.

Claim 6 (original): The image processing method as set forth in claim 5, wherein:

in the step (c), the identification of the user who made the request of the invalidation is carried out by input of a key operator code.